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Security Council

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Report of the Security Council mission to Central Africa, 4 to 11 November 2005

I. Introduction

1. In his letter dated 27 October 2005 (S/2005/682), the President of the Security Council informed the Secretary-General that the members of the Council had decided to send a mission to Central Africa from 4 to 11 November 2005, which would be led by Jean-Marc de La Sablière. Following consultations among the members of the Council, it was agreed that the composition of the mission should be as follows:

Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sablière (France), head of mission

Ambassador Abdallah Baali (Algeria)

Ambassador Alberto D'Alotto (Argentina)

Ambassador Simon Bodéhoussè Idohou (Benin)

Ms. Irene Vida Gala (Brazil)

Mr. Cheng Jingye (China)

Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj (Denmark)

Ambassador Adamantios Th. Vassilakis (Greece)

Ambassador Kenzo Oshima (Japan)

Ambassador Lauro L. Baja (Philippines)

Ambassador Mihnea I. Motoc (Romania)

Ambassador Alexander V. Konuzin (Russian Federation)

Mr. Justin McKenzie Smith (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Ambassador Augustine P. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania)

Mr. William Brencick (United States of America)

2. The terms of reference of the mission are annexed to document S/2005/682.

Note: A list of abbreviations used in the present report appears at the end of the document.

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3. The Council mission left New York on 4 November and returned on 11 November. During that period, the mission visited Kinshasa, Mbuji-Mayi and Kamina in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Bujumbura, Kigali, Entebbe (Uganda) and Dar es Salaam. The mission met with the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Joseph Kabila, the President of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza, the President of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, and the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Benjamin Mkapa.

4. The mission also met in Kinshasa with the four Vice-Presidents of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, separately; the Presidents the National Assembly and the Senate; the Chairman and members of the standing committee of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and the Chairman of the Media High Authority; the Joint Commission on Security Sector Reform; representatives of civil society and religious organizations; a group of women ministers and parliamentarians; and the International Committee in Support of the Transition (CIAT). The head of the mission also held informal discussions with the leadership of the opposition political party, the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social (UDPS).

5. The mission met in Mbuji-Mayi with the Governor of Kasai Oriental Province, the local representative of IEC and members of the Provincial Security Committee. The mission also visited the military base of Kamina (Katanga Province), where it received a comprehensive briefing on the military integration process in the presence of the Minister of Defence, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), the coordinator of the Military Integration Structure, the chairman of the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reinsertion, and the head of the European Union Mission of Assistance for Security Sector Reform (EUSEC).

6. In Bujumbura, the mission met with President Pierre Nkurunziza and held consultations with a Government delegation led by the Minister of External Relations and Cooperation. The mission also met with the leadership of the main political parties represented in Parliament: the Front pour la démocratie au Burundi (FRODEBU), the Union pour le progrès national (UPRONA) and the Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie — Forces pour la défense de la démocratie (CNN-FDD). The head of the mission met informally with the former Head of State, Domitien Ndayizeye. Members of the mission also met with civil society organizations working on transitional justice and judicial reform.

7. The mission was briefed in Kinshasa, Mbuji-Mayi and Kamina by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and in Bujumbura by the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB). The mission was accompanied by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, William Lacy Swing, in Kinshasa, Mbuji-Mayi, Kamina, Entebbe and Kigali, while the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Burundi, Carolyn McAskie, accompanied the mission in Bujumbura, Entebbe, Kigali and Dar es Salaam.

8. In Dar es Salaam, the mission met with President Mkapa, and with the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The mission also received briefings from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, Ibrahima Fall, and from the Chairman of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ibra Déguène Ka. The mission met with United Nations agencies and non-

governmental organizations based in the United Republic of Tanzania to discuss the issue of refugees, and with the academic community of Dar es Salaam.

9. The sixth mission of the Security Council to Central Africa took place at a time when the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has entered a new phase and the recent completion of the transition in Burundi has unveiled a variety of challenges to the consolidation of peace. Voter registration is under way in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in preparation for the holding of a constitutional referendum on 18 December, and for legislative and presidential elections to be completed before the end of the transitional period, on 30 June 2006. Meanwhile, the installation in September 2005 of a democratically elected Government in Burundi inaugurated the post-transitional phase, which will require the continued support of the international community.

II. Democratic Republic of the Congo

10. One of the key objectives of the Security Council mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was to observe at first hand the progress made in the peace and transition process, particularly with regard to elections, security sector reform, the disarmament of foreign and Congolese armed groups, the extension of State authority and the establishment of the rule of law. The Council noted that there had been a number of positive developments since its last visit, in November 2004.

11. Notwithstanding delays and immense logistical difficulties, the outcome of voter registration is encouraging. As at 7 November, over 20 million voters had registered. The Transitional Government has approved the draft electoral law, which it submitted to the Parliament on 7 November, while the mission was in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

12. While there is an urgent need for a thorough reform in the administration and management of the armed forces, there have been delays in the *brassage* process and in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of Congolese combatants. The Transitional Government also faces considerable difficulties in the delivery of regular support to integrated FARDC brigades deployed in operational theatres in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Progress has however been made in advancing the restructuring and reform of FARDC. Six integrated brigades have been trained and deployed to the Provinces of North and South Kivu and the Ituri district (Province Orientale).

Political transition

13. President Kabila and the four Vice-Presidents emphasized that much had been achieved in advancing the transitional process, particularly with regard to the objective agreed to in the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement on the Transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, signed on 17 December 2002, of organizing free, democratic and credible elections before the end of the transitional period.

14. It did not prove possible for the mission to meet jointly with the five-member *espace présidentiel*. The President and four Vice-Presidents nevertheless stressed that their relationship had improved since the installation of the Government of National Unity and Transition, and that in spite of the forthcoming electoral campaign they maintained an open dialogue with one another.

15. At an informal meeting, the UDPS leader, Etienne Tshisekedi, presented a memorandum to the head of the Security Council mission, indicating the party's willingness to join the transitional process. At the same time, UDPS called for the establishment of a dialogue including all of the political forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to evaluate the transition and revise its framework as appropriate.

16. President Kabila and the four Vice-Presidents acknowledged that inclusive elections would enhance the credibility of the process and ensure the legitimacy of the future government. They expressed their readiness to engage in an open dialogue with all political stakeholders, including UDPS. They stressed, however, that any discussion on the way forward should be guided by the present electoral time line, as well as by the principles of the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement. They called on the leadership of UDPS to make public its commitment to participate in and accept the results of the elections.

17. While recalling that the Council was not involved in the domestic politics of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the mission highlighted the merits of an inclusive process and encouraged the parties concerned to work in that spirit. The mission insisted that the time frame of the transition must be respected. The mission also stressed the need for the Government to create the socio-economic and political conditions that would ensure stability in the post-transitional period. President Kabila noted in this regard that a dialogue between the various Congolese political forces was ongoing.

18. The mission was informed by many of its interlocutors that corruption in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remained serious. One area of particular concern was the payment of salaries to the military. It was widely acknowledged that addressing this issue was also critical for the economic recovery of the country and the stability of an elected government. While the Transitional Government informed the Council that it had taken measures in this regard, including administrative sanctions and judicial proceedings against individuals found guilty of acts of corruption, it was acknowledged that impunity remained a major factor in the continuation of mismanagement practices, and that it was impossible to recover mishandled funds.

19. President Kabila stressed the determination of the Transitional Government to fight corruption. He also noted that after many years of widespread economic mismanagement it would take time for the Democratic Republic of the Congo to make significant progress. The mission encouraged its interlocutors to work closely and constructively with CIAT and other relevant international stakeholders in order to obtain every possible assistance needed to address this important issue.

20. The mission's interlocutors also agreed on the need to strengthen the capacity of the Congolese judiciary to tackle impunity, particularly as it relates to economic mismanagement and human rights violations.

Electoral process

21. All of the mission's interlocutors expressed their gratitude for the support the Democratic Republic of the Congo was receiving from the international community and MONUC, and in particular for their technical and logistical assistance for the elections.

22. The mission came away with the strong impression of overwhelming popular support and of high expectations for the elections, which will be the first in 40 years and are largely perceived by the Congolese people as a means of bringing about positive change.

23. While recognizing that the organization of the referendum and the subsequent polls would be a major logistical challenge, which could put pressure on the electoral calendar, all of the leaders of the transition and stakeholders reaffirmed their commitment to follow the electoral time line with a view to the successful and timely completion of the transitional process.

24. The mission reiterated the strong support of the Security Council for the electoral process and welcomed the high population turnout for voter registration. The mission underscored the need for the Congolese authorities to adhere strictly to the electoral time line, stressing that all the polls should be held before the end of the transitional period on 30 June 2006.

25. The mission stressed that the electoral process must not only respect the deadlines and remain credible, but also meet the expectations of the Congolese people, who had been demonstrating their eagerness to participate and freely elect their leaders. The mission also encouraged stakeholders in Kinshasa and Mbuji-Mayi to make further efforts regarding the inclusion of women in the political and electoral processes.

26. The mission further called upon its interlocutors to accelerate the review and adoption of the electoral law. President Kabila assured the mission that the electoral law would be considered by Parliament expeditiously. The law would be reviewed article by article, so that it could be voted and promulgated immediately after the referendum scheduled for 18 December 2005. The Government transmitted the law to the Parliament on 7 November, during the Council's visit to Kinshasa. At the same time, the mission's interlocutors expressed confidence in finding consensus on the principles of the electoral law, including on proportional representation for the election of the legislative body. Differences, however, remain regarding the size of electoral districts.

27. The Security Council mission stressed the need for the establishment of a level playing field during elections, including (1) the need to ensure that registration is conducted fairly in all provinces; (b) the opening of the political arena to all of the Congolese political forces; and (c) the provision of guarantees regarding freedom of expression. The mission called on the transitional authorities to ensure the impartiality of the public media during the electoral period. In this regard, the mission took note of the Media High Authority's efforts to address recent instances of "hate media" and its concerns regarding the regulation of the private media before and during the electoral campaign. Additional efforts are also required in the area of civic education, to improve popular understanding of the draft constitution and polling modalities.

28. The mission noted that challenges remained regarding the completion of voter registration in the Provinces of Bandundu and Equateur. Difficulties include voter sensitization and the opening of some 40,000 polling sites in time for the holding of the constitutional referendum on 18 December, and the organization of subsequent polls before 30 June 2006. The mission encouraged IEC to make every effort to address those challenges, including the training and deployment of some 200,000

electoral personnel and the establishment of security for elections. The mission was also made aware of the constraints and logistical challenges faced by MONUC in assisting IEC, including difficulties in securing air assets and the required personnel.

29. At the same time, the mission was encouraged that IEC, with the logistical support of MONUC, had commenced the pre-positioning of electoral material for the referendum, as well as the training of electoral personnel.

30. In Mbuji-Mayi, during the mission's visit, peaceful pro-UDPS demonstrations were staged, which did not affect the work of the mission but showed the involvement of local populations in the political process. The mission welcomed the strong commitment of the local authorities in that regard. Seventy-two per cent of the estimated electorate in Kasai Oriental had registered to vote.

31. The mission's interlocutors in Mbuji-Mayi indicated that the local police capacity, which is being strengthened with MONUC assistance, would be in a position to provide adequate security during the elections. The police however lacked basic equipment. Some concern was expressed regarding the time frame for the referendum, which would be held on only one day, as gaining access to a majority of the polling stations in the province would in some places require populations to travel for a significant number of days.

32. The mission was reminded that the main challenges facing people in Mbuji-Mayi, a city of 3 million inhabitants, were of a socio-economic nature, as they lacked basic services, including water and electricity, and benefited little from the substantial mining revenue generated by the exploitation of diamonds around the city.

Security issues

33. The Security Council mission insisted that progress in security sector reform was critical to the immediate and long-term stability of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular with regard to a continuation of operations aimed at the disarmament and repatriation of foreign armed groups. The mission's interlocutors stressed that the continued presence of such armed groups in the eastern part of the country was mostly a problem for the Congolese people, particularly as those groups harassed and committed serious human rights violations against local populations.

34. The Transitional Government highlighted its determination to carry through the disarmament and repatriation of all of the foreign armed groups present on its territory. It stressed that there was a need to reinforce the capacity of FARDC in that regard.

35. At the military base of Kamina, the mission received a comprehensive briefing on the efforts made and the challenges faced by the Transitional Government in advancing the process of integration of the armed forces. The mission took note of the Government's intention to stand up and deploy to the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo a total of nine integrated brigades, before April 2006, to conduct offensive operations against foreign armed groups, with MONUC support. A joint FARDC-MONUC-EUSEC operational directive had been prepared for that purpose. Government and MONUC interlocutors, however, stressed that FARDC faced logistical difficulties in supporting its units once deployed, and called for more direct international support in that regard.

36. While acknowledging the progress made by the Democratic Republic of the Congo in completing the training and deployment of six integrated brigades to the eastern part of the country, the mission expressed concern at the irregular payment of salaries to military and police personnel, which contributed to insecurity, as unpaid soldiers and police personnel lived off local populations.

37. The mission encouraged the Transitional Government to adopt the recommendations of the EUSEC report on reform of FARDC, including the completion of the census of military personnel which had been conducted with the assistance of South Africa, and the establishment of transparent and reliable mechanisms to ensure the regular payment of salaries to military personnel and improve their welfare. President Kabila indicated that the High Defence Council would shortly adopt the recommendations of the EUSEC report, albeit with some amendments.

38. The mission also expressed its concern regarding delays in the launching of the second wave of military integration, which should lead to the training and deployment of three additional integrated Congolese brigades before the end of 2005. Members of the Transitional Government indicated that the delays were largely attributable to the lack of candidates for military integration, as up to 60 per cent of the former combatants concerned by the second wave of military integration had chosen to join the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. The Government would make additional efforts to encourage the enrolment of former combatants in the military.

39. Regarding the cooperation among States in the region, President Kabila expressed the continuing interest of the Transitional Government in the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. He indicated, however, that the Government had requested a postponement of the second summit of the Conference, previously scheduled for 15 and 16 December in Nairobi, as the proposed dates would have coincided with the beginning of the electoral period.

III. Burundi

40. The Security Council mission visited Bujumbura on 8 and 9 November. The mission warmly congratulated the people and Government of Burundi for the successful conduct of the electoral process and the peaceful transfer of authority to an elected Government. The mission encouraged all stakeholders to continue to work together in a spirit of dialogue and consensus, and to respect the principle of power-sharing enshrined in the Constitution. The mission also noted the challenges facing the Government in the post-transitional period in its efforts to consolidate peace.

41. The mission was informed by the Government of Burundi of its internal and external priorities for the future. The mission underscored the continued commitment of the international community, and of the United Nations in particular, to assist the Burundian authorities in consolidating the achievements of the peace process. The mission also suggested that Burundi could benefit greatly from the support of the peacebuilding commission once it was established. It looks forward to the continuation of constructive dialogue between the Government of Burundi and its international partners.

42. The Government of Burundi noted that reconstruction, development, good governance, human rights and the return of refugees from neighbouring countries were its key priorities. The Government envisages a role for the United Nations primarily in reconstruction and development assistance, and suggested that the peacekeeping component of the United Nations could be gradually reduced, as security had returned to a major part of the country, with the exception of the western provinces of Bubanza, Bujumbura Rural and Cibitoke, where the operations of the Palipehutu-FNL rebellion and movements of other armed groups and weapons smuggling remained issues of concern.

43. The mission noted with due regard the Government's approach concerning the international community's support for its efforts in this new phase of consolidation. The mission, however, cautioned against an untimely disengagement of peacekeepers, as that had led in similar situations to a weakening of the overall security and political situation. The mission was reassured by the Government's agreement to review carefully, with the United Nations, the modalities for the expected disengagement of ONUB, which it agreed should be gradual. Burundi's main political parties, CNDD-FDD, FRODEBU and UPRONA, also expressed their support for a gradual disengagement of ONUB, in particular its military component.

44. With regard to the issue of justice and reconciliation, President Nkurunziza indicated that the Government had just appointed a committee to negotiate with the United Nations the modalities for the establishment of a truth commission and a special chamber within the Burundian judiciary, pursuant to resolution 1606 (2005). An association of non-governmental organizations known as "Transitional Justice" called for the establishment of a special chamber with international status to judge those responsible for the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed since 1972.

45. The mission expressed concern at the increase in insecurity and attacks on civilians, reportedly caused by Palipehutu-FNL, led by Agathon Rwasa. President Nkurunziza informed the Council that, despite the signing of a declaration on cessation of hostilities, repeated efforts to bring Palipehutu-FNL into the peace process, including recent attempts by the United Republic of Tanzania to resume negotiations, had failed. He expressed his disappointment at the lack of response by FNL and noted that, should FNL continue to threaten the security of Burundi and its people, the Government would have no alternative but to take decisive measures against the group. The President stressed, however, that the Government remained open to negotiations with FNL, should it demonstrate a willingness to engage in a constructive dialogue on entering the political process.

46. President Nkurunziza noted that a regional approach to ensuring peace and security in the Great Lakes region should be encouraged. He mentioned the proposal of the Tripartite Plus One Joint Commission to strengthen the mandate of MONUC, allowing for the forcible disarmament of foreign armed groups operating in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, including FNL, which he noted continued to use the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo as a rear base. President Nkurunziza also expressed support for the convening of the summit of the Great Lakes Conference.

47. Concerning the domestic political process, Burundi's main opposition parties urged the Council to remain vigilant regarding the implementation, by the Government, of the constitutional provisions on power-sharing. The leaders of

FRODEBU and UPRONA, while confirming their readiness to work within the elected institutions, expressed concern about what they perceived as an attempt by the Government to exclude them from the political process. President Nkurunziza acknowledged that the Government faced difficulties in reconciling its commitment to downsize the public administration with the constitutional requirements for the inclusion of Burundi's 36 political parties at all levels of Government. The Government would, however, make every effort to ensure that all of the country's political parties were represented in the administration, as appropriate.

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48. In Kinshasa and Bujumbura, the mission was briefed on the actions MONUC and ONUB had taken to address cases and allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse over the past year. The mission welcomed their efforts in addressing the issue, and took note of the fact that, effective October 2005, the Office for Internal Oversight Services had taken over investigative functions regarding sexual abuse and exploitation and that MONUC had now focused its efforts on preventive measures, training and policy planning. The mission encouraged MONUC and ONUB to continue their efforts in that regard.

49. The mission discussed resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, in Kinshasa with non-governmental organizations and women members of Parliament, and in Bujumbura with the ONUB gender adviser.

50. The head of mission was also briefed on the efforts undertaken by MONUC and ONUB regarding child protection. He encouraged them, in their upcoming reports on the implementation of resolution 1612 (2005), to suggest practical improvements that could be envisaged and to indicate the difficulties they faced in the performance of their mandate.

IV. Regional relations

51. On 9 November, the mission met with Presidents Museveni and Kagame in Entebbe and Kigali, respectively. It briefed them on its visits to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi. The mission expressed its satisfaction with the successful transition in Burundi, and welcomed the recent progress in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly with regard to the upcoming elections. The meetings focused on a discussion of security issues in the region.

52. In both Kigali and Kampala, the mission reiterated the concern of the Security Council regarding the continued presence of foreign armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that regard, it underlined the importance of supporting and reinforcing the integration of FARDC, so as to enable it to tackle those armed groups robustly, with MONUC support. The deployment in recent months to Ituri, and subsequently to the Kivus, of several FARDC integrated brigades had allowed it to engage the armed groups. The planned deployment of additional FARDC forces in those areas should add to the military pressure upon those groups.

53. Both President Museveni and President Kagame welcomed progress in voter registration in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and expressed support for the electoral process. They agreed that successful elections in the Democratic Republic

of the Congo would contribute to its internal stability, which was in the interest of the region. They added, however, that the establishment of regional stability would also require the resolution of the issue of the presence and activities of the Ugandan and Rwandan armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, as they continued to pose a threat not only to the Congolese civilian population but to their countries also.

54. President Museveni reiterated the call of the Tripartite Plus One Joint Commission that the Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda (FDLR) should be disarmed by force. He also called for closer cooperation between the United Nations and States in the region. He suggested that the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) be allowed to conduct joint operations with FARDC and MONUC, in particular should elements of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) again enter the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and that liaison officers be exchanged between UPDF, MONUC and FARDC.

55. President Kagame insisted that MONUC conduct operations against FDLR in North and South Kivu, as robustly as against Congolese militias in Ituri. The mission also discussed with President Kagame means for the Government of Rwanda to strengthen the incentives it currently offers to FDLR to encourage its combatants voluntarily to disarm and be repatriated and reintegrated into Rwandan society.

56. The mission highlighted its grave concerns over the humanitarian situation in northern Uganda, as well as the recent attacks on humanitarian workers and the security challenges faced by aid agencies in accessing areas in need of urgent relief. President Museveni indicated to the mission that LRA had been defeated. Small remnant LRA groups, however, were still active and continued to contribute to insecurity in northern Uganda. He reiterated his willingness and the determination of the Government of Uganda to continue to take measures to provide security for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and relief.

57. The mission encouraged the Government of Uganda to expedite the implementation of the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court for five LRA leaders, while not excluding the possibility of finding a peaceful solution for other elements of LRA. It also urged the Government to extend further the amnesty for rank-and-file LRA combatants and to assist their integration into their communities.

58. During the discussion with President Museveni, the mission emphasized that the use of force on the territory of a foreign State, without the latter's consent, would be a violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

59. The mission expressed its concerns over reports of continuing violations of the arms embargo imposed on the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the Security Council. It urged the Governments of Uganda and Rwanda to improve their cooperation with the Group of Experts established under resolution 1533 (2004). It also urged them to reinforce existing measures to prevent and deny the entry of arms into the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo through their respective territories.

60. The mission reminded its interlocutors of the link between the existence of armed groups, arms trafficking and the illegal exploitation of natural resources. The mission also reminded President Museveni and President Kagame of the Security

Council's call on States in the region to prevent the continuation of trafficking in natural resources in their respective territories.

61. Both President Museveni and President Kagame stated that, to their knowledge, no arms had entered the Democratic Republic of the Congo from their territories. President Museveni questioned the investigative approach of the United Nations in monitoring the situation. He offered to explore additional means of strengthening controls at Uganda's borders with the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Government of Rwanda informed the mission that it had established an inter-ministerial committee to monitor the implementation of the embargo on its territory and to strengthen Rwanda's cooperation with the Group of Experts.

62. The mission subsequently received a briefing from the Chairman of the Group of Experts on its activities since the publication by the sanctions committee on 1 November of a list of individuals and entities subject to sanctions under resolution 1596 (2005). The mission encouraged the group to continue its investigations, the scope of which will be extended to include embargo violations that may occur from within the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The mission also highlighted the importance for all States concerned in the region to cooperate fully with the work of the Group of Experts.

63. On 10 November, the mission met in Dar es Salaam with President Mkapa and Foreign Minister Kikwete. Discussions centred on the peace processes in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Members of the mission paid tribute to the role of the United Republic of Tanzania in supporting and facilitating both processes. The mission briefed the President and Foreign Minister on the outcome of its visits to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda.

64. The mission received detailed briefings on recent efforts by the United Republic of Tanzania to facilitate dialogue between the Government of Burundi and Palipehutu-FNL, as mandated by the regional initiative for peace in Burundi. President Mkapa noted that mistrust between the two parties remained high. The failure of FNL to pursue contacts with either the Government of Burundi or that of the United Republic of Tanzania was disappointing. President Mkapa stressed, however, that both Governments remained open to negotiations.

65. Tanzanian authorities shared the mission's concerns regarding the security situation in Burundi, including the risks that might arise from an untimely withdrawal of ONUB. They highlighted the need for any disengagement of ONUB to be cautious and gradual. Such an approach would help in providing guarantees for the long-term consolidation of peace in Burundi. Both the President and the Foreign Minister called for additional support for the integration process of the Burundian army.

66. President Mkapa and Foreign Minister Kikwete expressed support for the transition and welcomed recent progress in the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They highlighted the need for the elections to be credible, including through the strengthening of IEC, as that would ensure stability after the completion of the transition. They emphasized that voter education and the commitment of all of the political forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo were key components of credibility.

67. The mission's interlocutors expressed concern at the continuing insecurity in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and called for rapid and firm collective action against the foreign armed groups present in that region.

68. President Mkapa reiterated his country's commitment to continue cooperating with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in support of the voluntary return of the Burundian and Congolese refugees present in the United Republic of Tanzania. The mission was briefed by United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations on the process thus far and the challenges faced.

69. President Mkapa and the Foreign Minister looked forward to the timely convening of the summit of the Great Lakes Conference.

70. In Dar es Salaam, the Security Council mission also met with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, Ibrahima Fall. Noting that the Conference had provided a forum for countries in the region to peacefully discuss issues of common concern, the Special Representative stressed that a significant postponement of the summit would affect the momentum of the process. He suggested that the Security Council urge countries in the region to maintain that momentum. In the meantime, the draft protocols, including the protocol on peace and security, adoption of which was expected at the ministerial-level meeting scheduled for mid-February, would be strengthened and finalized. The mission highlighted the need for participating countries to prioritize the expected outcomes of the Conference, including a reduction of the number of projects, with a view to achieving meaningful results. The Special Representative indicated that the current selection of projects and protocols reflected consensus on the priorities for each of the main themes of the Conference.

71. In the meeting at the University of Dar es Salaam, teachers and students discussed the regional situation with members of the mission and urged the Security Council to increase its involvement in Africa.

V. Recommendations to the Security Council

72. The mission recommends that the Security Council consider the following actions.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

1. Encourage the Parliament to review the draft electoral law on an accelerated basis and approve the law in advance article by article before the referendum, so that it can be adopted immediately after the referendum.

2. Urge the Government and Parliament to ensure that the electoral law is clear, comprehensive and easy for the electorate to understand.

3. Call upon the Congolese authorities and all political actors to ensure the holding of free, fair, transparent and democratic elections, as provided for by the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement, before the end of the transitional period on 30 June 2006.

4. Encourage the Government to publish an electoral timetable as soon as possible.

5. Invite the Government to increase civic education and voter sensitization activities, particularly among women, to ensure widespread public understanding regarding the draft constitution, the voting system and the electoral process.

6. Encourage the Government and IEC to take the necessary measures to ensure that voter registration is conducted fairly in all of the provinces, including by extending registration time lines, as appropriate, to ensure that registration rates in all of the provinces are commensurate.

7. Encourage IEC to take the necessary measures to ensure freedom of expression and equal access to impartial public media during the electoral campaign.

8. Invite the Congolese authorities to facilitate the deployment of independent international and national electoral observers throughout the country.

9. Urge all stakeholders, in particular the Media High Authority, to deter hate messages and incitements to violence, in particular during the electoral period.

10. Encourage the Transitional Government to engage FDLR and urge it to disarm and repatriate to Rwanda. The Transitional Government should in this regard ensure that all possible steps are taken to strengthen the capacity of FARDC.

11. Urge the Transitional Government to expedite the adoption by the High Defence Council and the implementation by relevant Congolese authorities of reforms based on the recommendations contained in the EUSEC report, in particular with regard to the transparent and regular payment of salaries.

12. Urge the Transitional Government to implement without further delay the second phase of the integration process.

13. Encourage MONUC to continue to support the actions taken by FARDC to step up the pressure on foreign armed groups operating in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

14. Encourage the international community to increase its assistance for the formation, training and equipment of FARDC integrated brigades and of the national police.

15. Encourage the Transitional Government to ensure that those responsible for abuses of human rights are brought to justice without delay, in particular leaders of armed groups.

16. Urge the Transitional Government to take all necessary steps to end incidents of human rights abuses by military and police personnel and to bring to justice those responsible.

17. Encourage the Transitional Government to make progress on building the capacity of the judiciary.

18. Urge the international community to assist the Government in ensuring transparent economic management. Urge the Government to participate fully in the regular meetings of the *espace présidentiel* and CIAT on this issue.

Uganda

19. Call upon the Government to respect fully the sovereignty of neighbouring States and in particular to refrain from any use of force outside its borders.

20. Urge the Government to take further measures to ensure that remnant militias operating in the Ituri district receive no support from Ugandan territory.

21. Encourage the Government to cooperate with the efforts of the United Nations towards resolving the continued threat to regional security posed by the presence of foreign armed groups on Congolese territory.

22. Encourage the Government and MONUC, in cooperation with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to study the possibility of exchanging liaison officers where advisable.

23. Urge the Government to ensure that the arms embargo imposed by the Security Council on the Democratic Republic of the Congo is respected and enforced on its territory, in particular by establishing stricter controls at its borders with the Democratic Republic of the Congo to curtail the illegal cross-border trafficking of natural resources and arms and the movement of combatants.

24. Urge the Government to improve its cooperation with the Group of Experts with a view to facilitating the implementation of its mandate.

25. Encourage the Government to continue to take all necessary steps to protect civilians in northern Uganda and provide security for the provision of humanitarian assistance, including through the reinforcement of military and police deployments.

26. Encourage the Government to offer positive incentives for LRA combatants to lay down their arms, including effective reintegration programmes.

27. Encourage the Ugandan authorities to explore all ways and means of resolving the conflict in the north of the country, including the extension of the amnesty law to members of LRA who are not indicted by the International Criminal Court for serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Rwanda

28. Encourage the Government to cooperate with the efforts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations to resolve the continued threat to regional security posed by the presence of foreign armed groups on Congolese territory.

29. Encourage the Government to reaffirm publicly all the commitments taken in regard to promoting the return of FDLR to Rwanda, including its commitment not to prosecute any returning ex-combatant under 25 years of age.

30. Urge the Government to ensure that the arms embargo imposed by the Security Council on the Democratic Republic of the Congo is respected and enforced on its territory, in particular by establishing stricter controls at its borders with the Democratic Republic of the Congo to curtail the illegal crossborder trafficking of natural resources and arms and the movement of combatants.

31. Urge the Government to improve its cooperation with the Group of Experts with a view to facilitating the implementation of its mandate.

Burundi

32. Encourage the Government and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to determine the modalities of a gradual disengagement of the peacekeeping presence of ONUB, taking into account, in this phase, the merits of a United Nations contribution and support to the reconstruction and the consolidation of peace in Burundi.

33. Encourage the Government and all Burundian political actors to engage in the consolidation of peace and national reconciliation by continuing to follow the path of dialogue, power-sharing and consensus.

34. Encourage the Government to make the best use of the Forum of Partners to support reforms provided for in the Arusha Agreement and to mobilize international assistance for the reconstruction of Burundi.

35. Urge the Government to complete the implementation of the programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, including the effective reintegration of former combatants.

36. Encourage the Government to continue to engage Palipehutu-FNL with a view to bringing them into the peace process, and call upon FNL to join the peace process without further delays or conditions.

37. Encourage the Burundian authorities to continue to work with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General with a view to establishing a mechanism for ending impunity and promoting reconciliation.

Regional cooperation

38. Encourage States in the region to resolve their differences through peaceful dialogue and consultations and through the establishment of confidence-building measures and mechanisms.

39. Urge the participants in the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to maintain the current momentum so that the second summit can be held as soon as possible, and to prioritize the expected outcomes of their negotiations with a view to achieving meaningful results.

Abbreviations

CIAT	International Committee in Support of the Transition
CNDD	Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie
EUSEC	European Union Mission of Assistance for Security Sector Reform
FARDC	Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
FROBEDU	Front pour la démocratie au Burundi
FDD	Forces pour la défense de la démocratie
FDLR	Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda
FNL	Forces nationales de libération
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MONUC	United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
ONUB	United Nations Operation in Burundi
UPDF	Ugandan People's Defence Forces
UPDS	Union pour le progrès et la démocratie sociale
UPRONA	Union pour le progrès national